

**WEIRD
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STRANGE AND UNBELIEVABLE!

JULY 1951

NO. 8



JOURNEY *into*



10¢

FEAR

**BELLS of the
DAMNED**

**FATAL
FOOTSTEPS**



**PAGES
of DEATH**

**...ALSO GHOST
COMMAND**





WEB COMIC
UNIVERSE.COM

Bells Of The Damned

DOCTOR BELA WAS FAMED THE WORLD OVER FOR HIS BELLS—BUT NO ONE KNEW THE DREAD FORMULA HE USED TO PRODUCE THE SILVERY, ALMOST HUMAN TONES! IT TOOK A YOUNG AMERICAN, RUSHING IN WHERE ANGELS FEARED TO GO, TO DISCOVER THE SINISTER SECRET OF THE BELLS OF THE DAMNED...



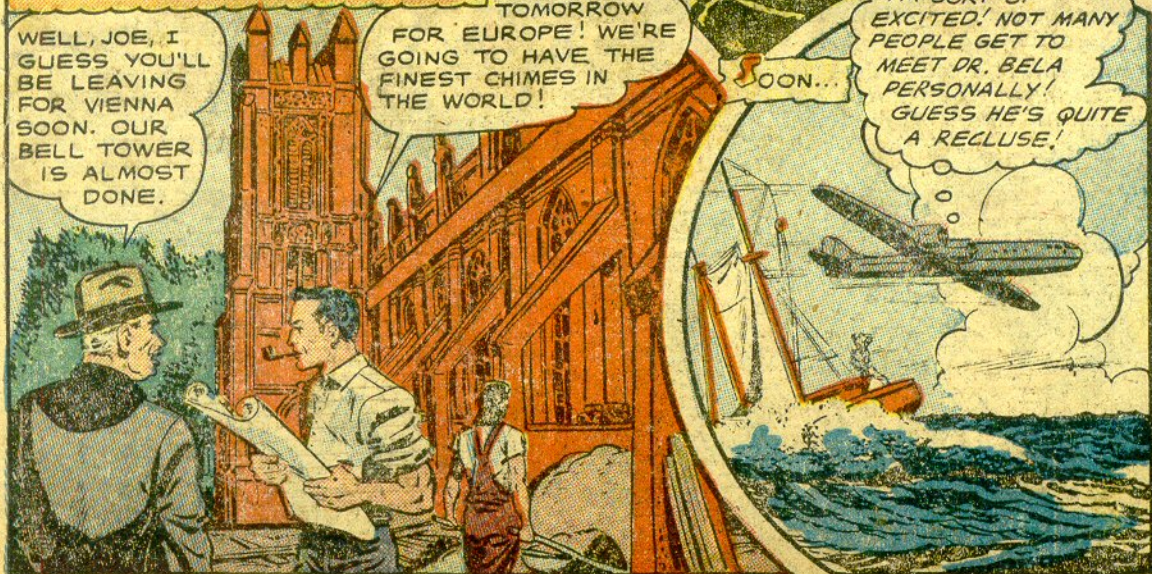
AS A CHURCH NEARS COMPLETION IN A SMALL AMERICAN CITY...

WELL, JOE, I GUESS YOU'LL BE LEAVING FOR VIENNA SOON. OUR BELL TOWER IS ALMOST DONE.

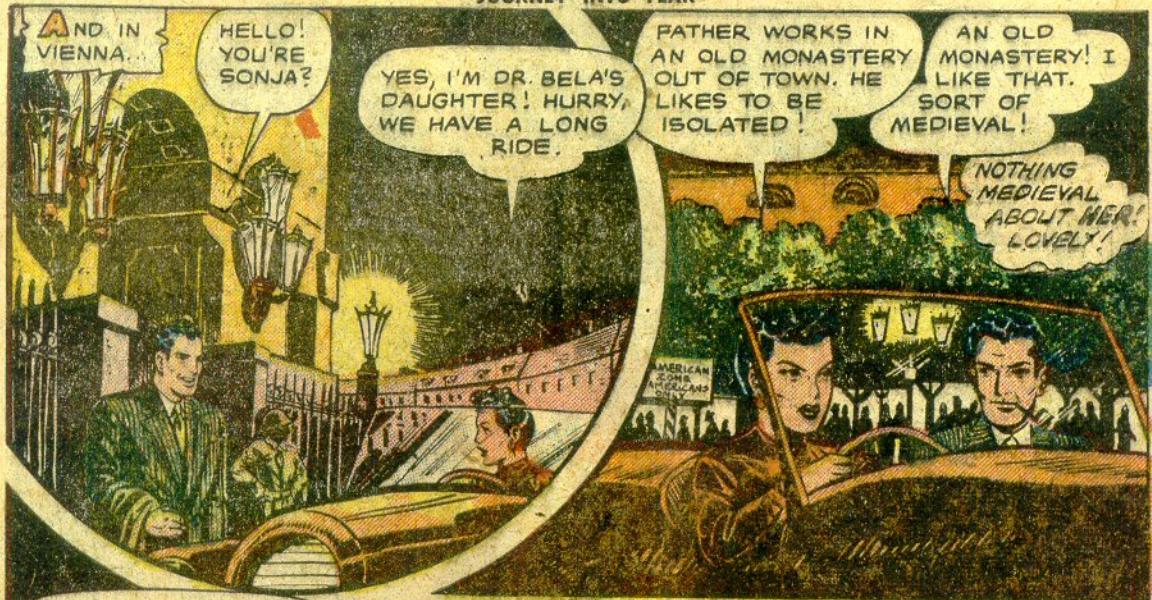
YES, I LEAVE TOMORROW FOR EUROPE! WE'RE GOING TO HAVE THE FINEST CHIMES IN THE WORLD!

SOON...

I'M SORT OF EXCITED! NOT MANY PEOPLE GET TO MEET DR. BELA PERSONALLY! GUESS HE'S QUITE A RECLUSE!



JOURNEY INTO FEAR



AND IN VIENNA...

HELLO! YOU'RE SONJA?

YES, I'M DR. BELA'S DAUGHTER! HURRY, WE HAVE A LONG RIDE.

FATHER WORKS IN AN OLD MONASTERY OUT OF TOWN. HE LIKES TO BE ISOLATED!

AN OLD MONASTERY! I LIKE THAT. SORT OF MEDIEVAL!

NOTHING MEDIEVAL ABOUT HER! LOVELY!

SO THAT'S WHERE THE FAMOUS BELLS ARE CAST! KIND OF CREEPY, ISN'T IT?

THE RED LIGHT? THAT COMES FROM THE FURNACES! BUT YOU'LL SOON SEE FOR YOURSELF!

MINUTES LATER...

WELCOME, MR. PRESTON! I AM HONORED!

HELLO, DR. BELA! HOPE YOU HAVEN'T STARTED CASTING OUR BELLS YET!

HERE IS THE AMERICAN FATHER!

NOW TO BUSINESS, SIR! YOUR BELLS! HOW MANY SOPRANOS DO YOU WANT, HOW MANY TENORS, BASSES, ETC!

WHEW—THIS IS MEDIEVAL! LIKE STEPPING BACK IN TIME!

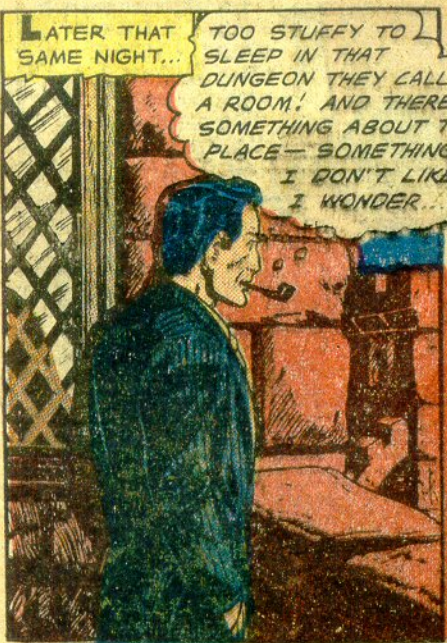
HAH—YOU MEAN THE COSTUMES! THERE IS A REASON, MR. PRESTON! MAYBE I WILL TELL YOU SOMETIME!

AND LATER...

I, ER, WE HAVEN'T QUITE DECIDED, DR. BELA!

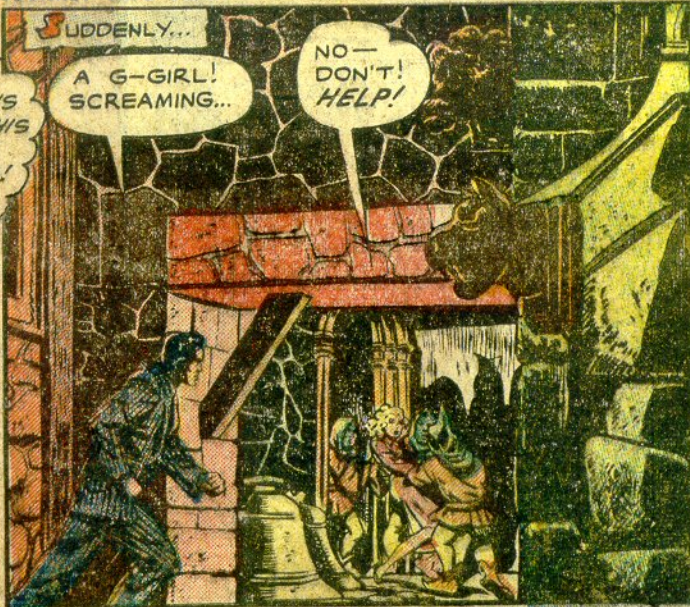
FUNNY! HE TALKS AS THOUGH THEY WERE HUMANS! LIKE A—A CHOIR!





LATER THAT SAME NIGHT...

TOO STUFFY TO SLEEP IN THAT DUNGEON THEY CALL A ROOM! AND THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT THIS PLACE—SOMETHING I DON'T LIKE! I WONDER...



SUDDENLY...

A G-GIRL! SCREAMING...

NO—DON'T! HELP!



HEY! LET THE GIRL ALONE!

MIND YOUR BUSINESS, FOOL!

WE OBEY OUR MASTER!



DON'T KNOW WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT, BUT I'LL FIND OUT! YOU LITTLE MONSTERS!

SAVE ME! PLEASE!

YUUUU!

GET HIM!



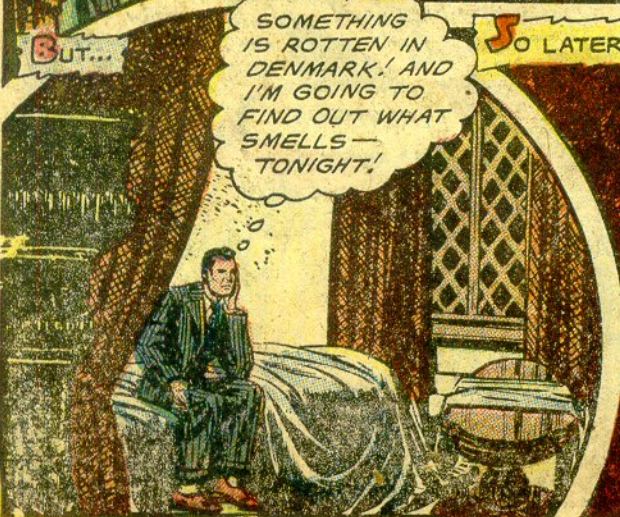
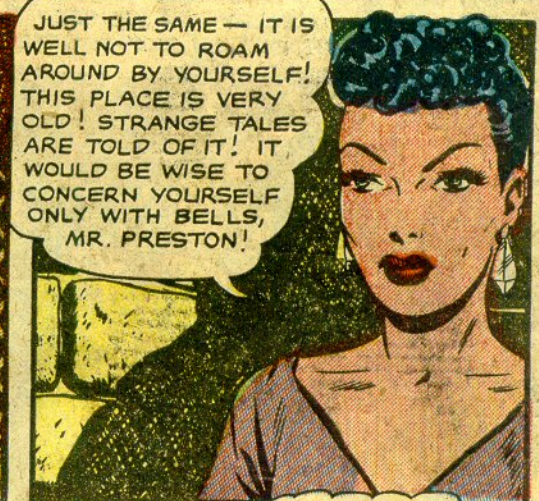
GUESS MY HUNCH WAS RIGHT! THERE'S TROUBLE HERE ALL RIGHT. AND I'M IN IT!

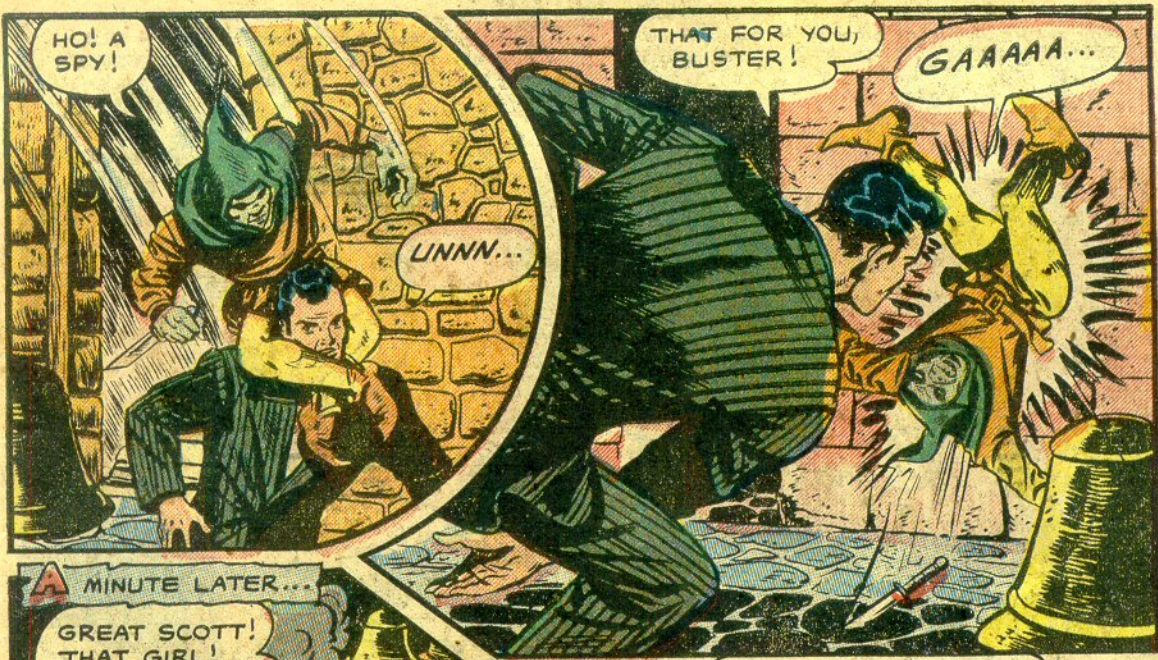
KILL THE INTERFERING FOOL!



HAH—NOW WE WILL SEE WHAT OUR MASTER SAYS!

UGNHHHH...







SO, MR. PRESTON! NOW YOU KNOW THE SECRET OF MY BELLS! THAT IS BAD FOR YOU!

SECRET! YOU MEAN—

YES, FOOL! MY FATHER PUTS A HUMAN SOUL INTO EACH BELL! THE VOICES OF THE DEAD SPEAK AGAIN IN THE METAL! BUT YOU WILL TELL NO ONE!



MY DAUGHTER IS RIGHT! YOU MUST DIE! I WAS A FOOL TO LET YOU COME, BUT PEOPLE WERE GETTING SUSPICIOUS! BUT NOW I WILL MAKE A BELL OUT OF YOU!

ME! A B-BELL!

YOU HAVE A FINE TENOR VOICE, MR. PRESTON! AND BACK HOME THEY WILL BE PUZZLED—WHEN THEY HEAR IT IN A BELL!

WASTE NO TIME, FATHER. HE IS DANGEROUS!



FIENDS! IF I GO I'LL TAKE SOME OF YOU WITH ME!

NAAAAAAA!

STOP HIM!

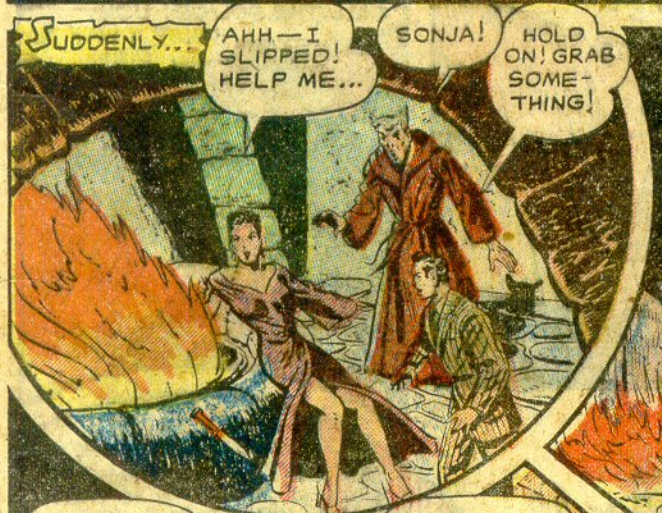


NOW THE ENRAGED PRESTON FIGHTS FOR HIS LIFE...

GUESS I CAN HANDLE YOU MIDGETS, ALL RIGHT! LIKE THIS!

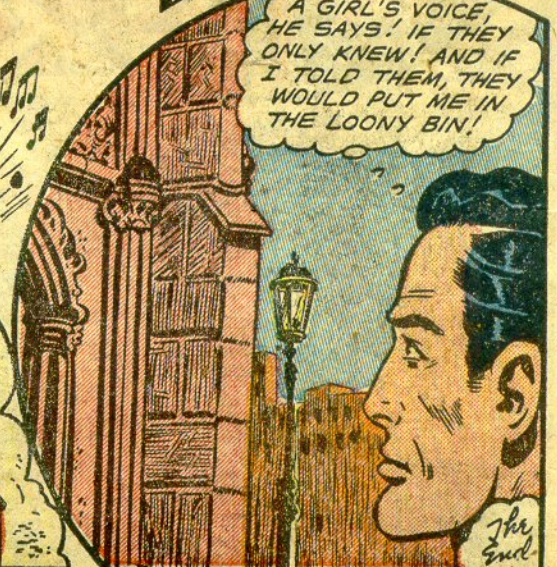
FOOLS! DON'T LET HIM GET AWAY!







A MONTH LATER...



FATAL FOOTSTEPS

BLOOD RED MOON SHINING BEHIND A GIBBET! AN OLD CRONE CACKLES AS SHE STEALS THE SHOES OF A HANGED MAN— THUS BEGAN THE TERRIBLE TALE OF THE SINISTER SHOES...



OVER A CENTURY LATER... OHH! I DON'T

SEE THIS, SHARON! THE MURDER GUN IN THE TRENT CASE!

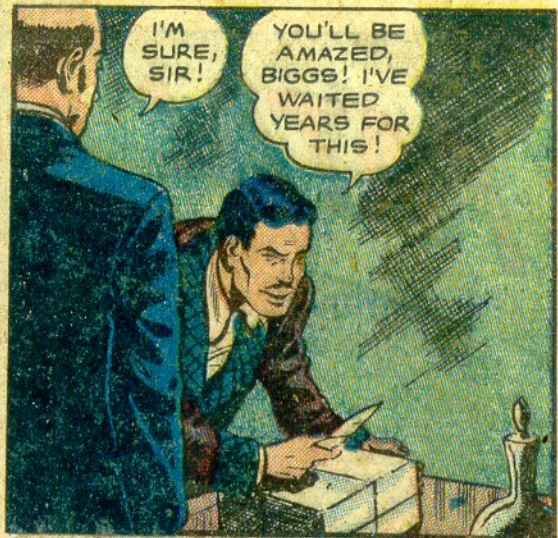
LIKE YOUR HOBBY, DALE! COLLECTING MURDER WEAPONS!

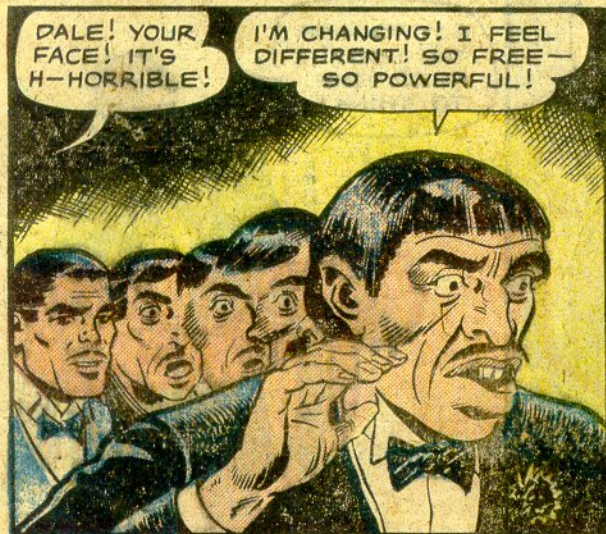


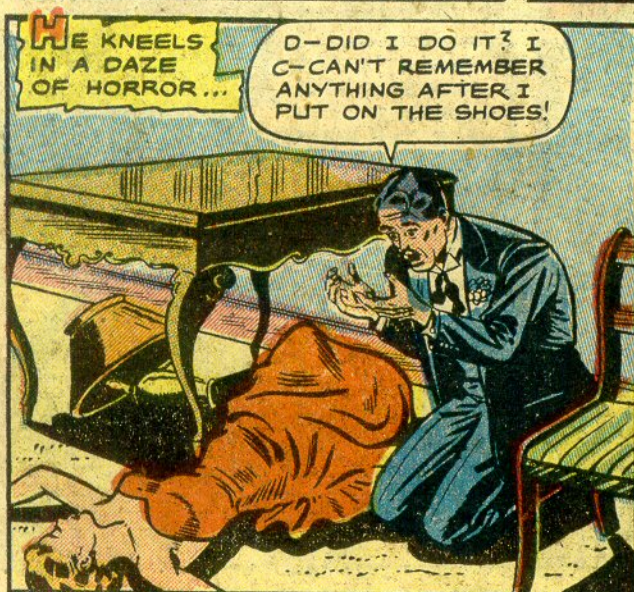
DON'T BE SQUEAMISH, MY DEAR! WAIT UNTIL YOU SEE MY LATEST!

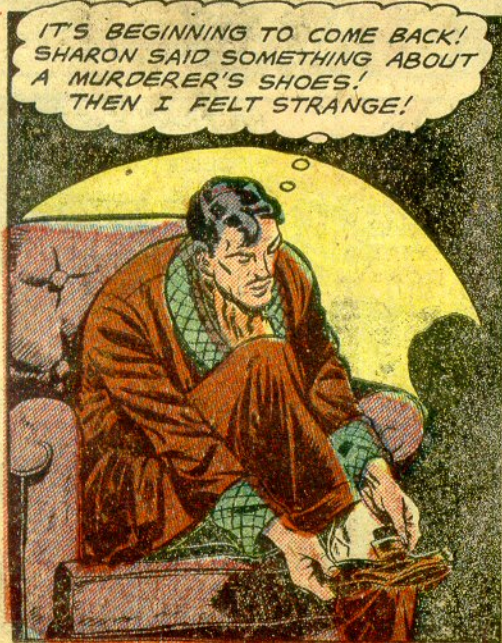
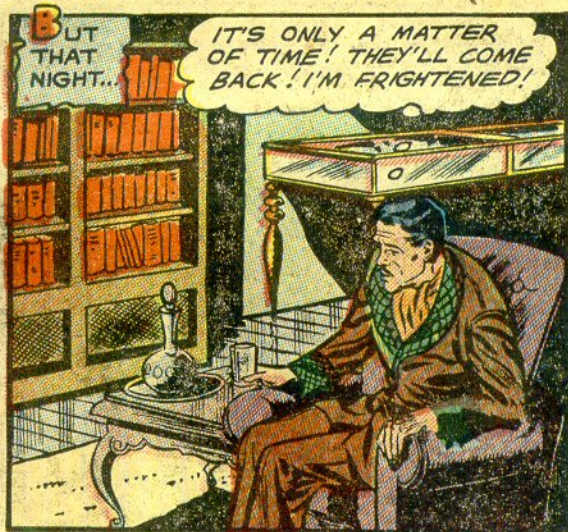
WHAT NOW? THE AXE THAT LIZZIE BORDEN USED?















GHOST CLINIC

by Doctor Shade



THE THING IN THE WELL

JOHAN BARTLEY, viewing the winding road from his point of vantage atop a green hill, was conscious that he had stepped into another world. Here, in the soft Welsh twilight, with the mournful cry of a cuckoo in his ears, he saw and understood the land as it must have been a thousand years ago. Time and the ravages of the machine age had strangely missed this one valley, this soft green fold in the hills. There was no coal dust, no stacks and tipples, no begrimed and weary men. There was only the ancient castle below him now, falling into mouldering ruin, the tottering battlements etched in Gothic splendor against the dusking sky.

The man felt a little tremor of excitement course through him. At last! He was so near the end of his chase, come at last to the Castle of Glenwyth. There, dour and stark, it lay spread before him. Just as it had been described in the map, the tattered bit of parchment that even now rested in his pocket. Glenwyth! Where in the ancient times a robber baron had lived and died. Died, yes, but not before he had wrested untold wealth from the land. Gold! New shivers traced up and down the man's spine. Gold, indeed. Gold that no man had ever found!

Bartley picked up the ruck sack that lay beside him. He began to descend the gentle slope, heading straight for the moat that surrounded the ruin. Now that he was so close to his goal he felt a desire to dawdle, to savor the experience. He was like a child trying to make a lollypop last out the day.

He forced himself to hurry. A glance at the sky told him that rain was coming, and soon. Clouds were piling up over the castle now, like curdled milk, and even as he watched lightning forked livid and yellow in the gloom. A little breeze came from nowhere and began to moan through the turrets and towers of the old castle. Bartley walked even faster. He did not want to spend the night in such a place. He must find the well, get what he sought, and get back to the village.

The moat was filled with greenish scum, heavy with sedge. An odor of death and

decay drifted up from it. The man found stepping stones, slippery with brown moss, and so crossed the moat. Now he was at the entrance of the keep, where once a portcullis had barred the way. A night bird wheeled over him, and from somewhere he heard the flutter and squeak of bats. From a corner a great gray rat stared at him with red eyes of malice.

"The well," Bartley told himself. "Hurry!" Then he had to laugh at his own nervousness. He was worse than the villagers, who, when he had asked them to help him, shrank away in fear. One old gaffer in particular had tried to dissuade Bartley from visiting the castle.

"It's a bad thing," the old man had said in his strange mixture of Welsh and English. "It's a dread bad goblin in a castle! Folk say it kills all of them who go to the castle. And them he don't kill, he drives mad! You're a fool to go, lad."

BARTLEY HAD thanked the old man. Later, in his room, he had had a quiet laugh. Of course there were stories about the old castle, there were bound to be. There was even a legend about a demon who dwelled in the well and guarded the gold of long dead Glenwyth. How Bartley had chuckled. But he had not come all the way from New York to be stopped by a few old wive's tales. He was sure that Glenwyth's gold was still in the castle somewhere, and he meant to have it.

He was deep in the ruins now. He began to use his flashlight, throwing a spear of white light into the clammy crevices of aged stone. The well, according to his prized map, would be somewhere in the dungeons. From it water had been drawn for the poor wretches who had rotted away in Glenwyth's charnel holes.

At last he found a stone stair that wound down into the bowels of the castle. Bartley hesitated, then forced himself to take the first step down. Fool! There was nothing, bats and the dead dust of a thousand years. He felt his way cautiously along, keeping to the dank wall at his left. The air grew more fetid as he went lower. Down and down, the stairs twisting like a snake. Overhead the faint twilight faded and died away.

When he came to the bottom of the stairs he found himself in a great chamber of stone. He should be close to the dungeons now.

Five minutes later he saw a white shadow glint in the dark. The hair curled on his neck as he saw that it was a skeleton chained to a ringbolt set into a wall. The chains, heavy with rust, fell apart as Bartley touched them with his foot. A skull grinned up at Bartley, and it was only his imagination that made the skull seem to be laughing. Suddenly the man was aware that he was sweating heavily, and that the sweat was cold on his body. For the first time he admitted that he was afraid. Afraid with a slow, growing, senseless dread.

He saw the well then. A circular hole set in the middle of a large chamber. It was a good six feet across, and around it, knee high, was a coping of rotting brickwork. Bartley kneeled carefully by the side, not resting his weight on the coping, and peered down. He could see nothing but blackness down there. He picked up a shard of masonry and dropped it into the black maw. Seconds passed, then he heard a faint splash. It must be a hundred feet deep, he thought.

That did not trouble him. If his map was right the gold was set into the side of the well, not three feet down. A little room had been made and bricked up afterward. And Glenwyth, so the legend went, had then slain the mason and hurled his body into the well.

Bartley lay on his stomach and put his hand down into the blackness. His fingers touched the soft, cold hair of moss. Then more stone, slippery with water. Cold, dank as death! He went around the wall, exploring in this manner, probing for a weak spot in the masonry. Seeking an opening of some kind.

He found it. Bartley caught his breath as his fingers touched stone, pulled at it, and felt it crumble and fall into the depths. Then more stone fell and he could thrust his hand into the opening. Eagerly, breathing hard, the man crept closer to the edge of the well, reaching in . . .

Something gripped his hand!

AT FIRST Bartley could not even scream. His eyes popped in the dark, the sour breath labored in his lungs, a great retching welled in his scalded throat. He was cold as he had never known cold before, yet freshets of sweat sprang from every pore. His mouth was open, yet

he could make no sound. Only his feet moved, kicking frantically at the stone floor of the dungeon.

The grip on his hand tightened. It was as though he had put his hand into jelly, into something soft and shapeless and cold, yet with a terrible strength of its own. He could feel it crawling upward along his arm, toward his elbow. Steadily, relentlessly, the thing increased its grip. Then Bartley heard a scraping noise, saw with new terror that the sound was that of his shoes on the stone. He was being pulled into the well an inch at a time!

The man screamed then. He fought back, clutching at the coping with his free hand, bracing, writhing, trying to halt the slow progress of his body into the well. And the dungeon seemed to close in. He heard, in his mind, a chuckle. A horrible dry chuckle. He knew, then, that the thing in the well was talking to him. That somehow it had the power to make its victims understand . . .

"Ho-ho-ho—" said the voice from the well, echoing in the frenzied brain of the man. "Ho-ho— you thought you would get Glenwyth's gold, did you! So many fools have thought that before! But you will not. I guard the gold for Glenwyth. For a thousand years now I have guarded it. How many have come I do not recall! Ho-ho— they come, but they do not leave!"

Bartley screamed again. In his scream was all the mortal anguish that can fill a man. He tugged vainly at the thing that held him. Jelly, hairy, not soft and not hard, not anything. Just a terrible grip that pulled and pulled and pulled . . .

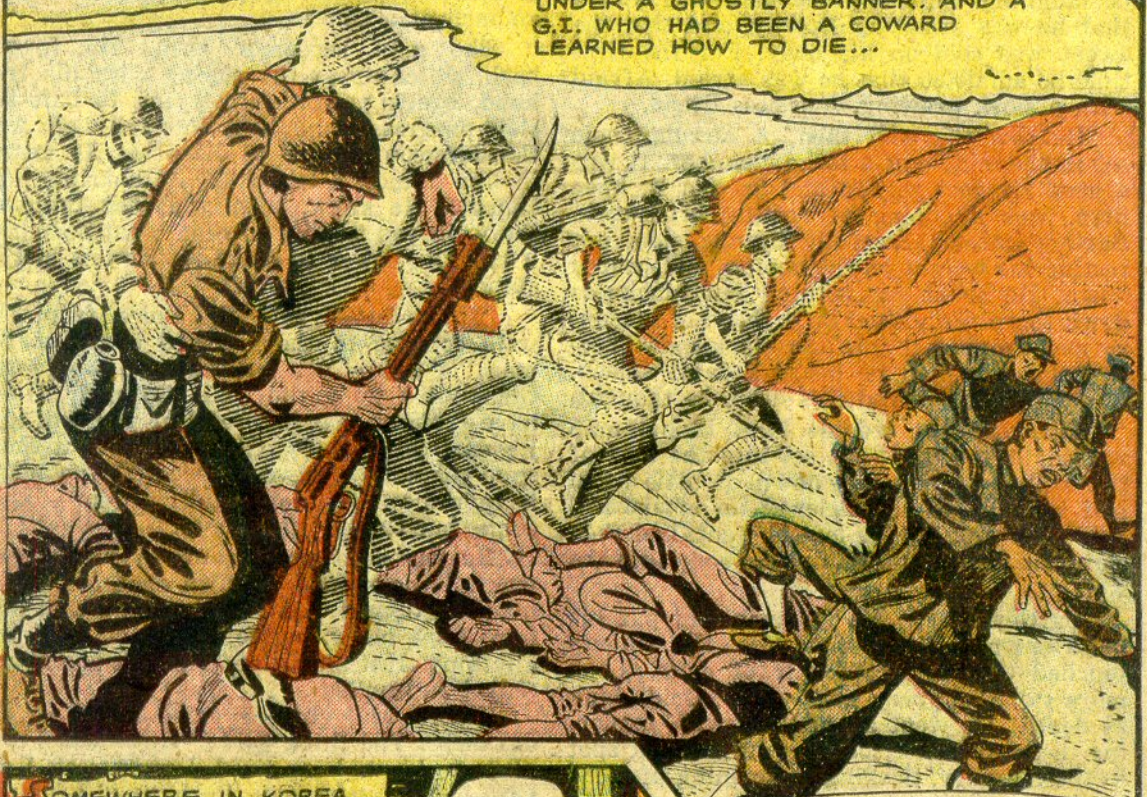
That awful chuckle came again in the darkness. The thing said: "Ho— you I will allow to leave. I am tired, I must rest. I am very old and very evil. Perhaps if I let you go they will see and leave me in peace. Me and the gold. So go, fool!"

The thing fell away from Bartley's hand. He scrambled to his feet, still screaming. He ran. Even as his feet clattered on the stairs he could hear the dreadful dry chuckling in his brain. He would, he knew, always hear it.

They found him at dawn, wandering along a lane not far from the castle. The men who found him took one look and asked no questions. They were kindly men, but they were in a hurry, and taking care of Bartley would be of great inconvenience to them. The nearest asylum was fifty miles away.

Ghost Command

OUT OF THE PAST THEY CAME, THE WRAITHS OF LONG DEAD HEROES UNDER A GHOSTLY BANNER! AND A G.I. WHO HAD BEEN A COWARD LEARNED HOW TO DIE...



SOMEWHERE IN KOREA...

PRIVATE KANE REPORTING, SIR!

YES! I WANTED TO SEE THE SON OF MY OLD BUDDY!

I WAS WITH YOUR DAD IN THE ARGONNE, SON! HE WAS THE BRAVEST MAN I EVER KNEW! DIED IN MY ARMS!



JOURNEY INTO FEAR

LATER, AS TAD KANE GOES INTO ACTION...

I'M S-SCARED!
MY FEET DON'T
WANT TO MOVE!

C'MON! GET
THE LEAD OUT!
GOOKS AHEAD!

JOE CARLSON!
B-BLOWN TO
PIECES!



CHARGE!
KILL ALL
AMERICANS!

UGH! I'M
SHOT!

I CAN'T
TAKE THIS!

I'M GETTING OUT OF THIS!
I O-DON'T WANT TO
DIE!



SO I'M A COWARD! I'M NOT A HERO
LIKE MY DAD! BUT I'M STILL ALIVE!



BUT SOON...

A STRAGGLER!

OKAY YOU!
COME
ALONG!

HUH!



AT THE COURT-MARTIAL...

YOU'VE NOT ONLY DISGRACED THE SERVICE AND YOURSELF, KANE, BUT ALSO THE NAME OF YOUR HERO FATHER!

Y-YES, SIR!



YOU DESERVE NO MERCY! YOU WILL BE EXECUTED BY A FIRING SQUAD!



THAT NIGHT IN THE BLEAK CELL...

THEY'RE—(SOB)—RIGHT! I'M A COWARD! I DESERVE TO DIE!



SUDDENLY...

THAT S-STRANGE LIGHT! W-WHAT IS IT?



TAD! DON'T YOU KNOW ME—YOUR FATHER!

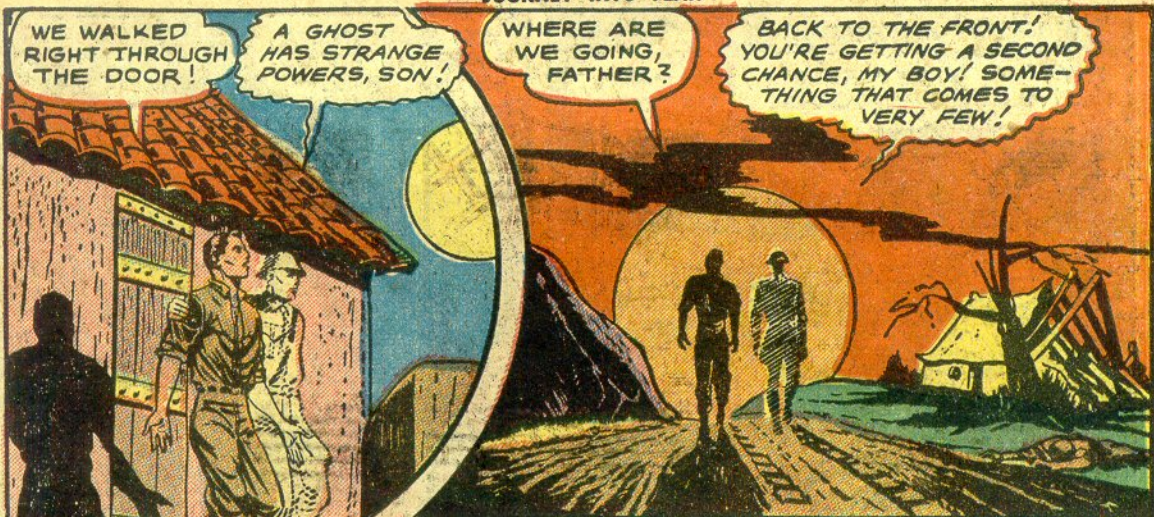
DAD! IT'S REALLY YOU! Y-YOU'VE COME BACK FROM THE DEAD!



COME ALONG, SON! THERE'S MUCH TO DO TONIGHT!

I'M ASHAMED, DAD! I DISGRACED YOU!





WE WALKED
RIGHT THROUGH
THE DOOR!

A GHOST
HAS STRANGE
POWERS, SON!

WHERE ARE
WE GOING,
FATHER?

BACK TO THE FRONT!
YOU'RE GETTING A SECOND
CHANCE, MY BOY! SOME-
THING THAT COMES TO
VERY FEW!



THERE'S YOUR
OUTFIT, TAD! IN
A FIGHT! GO
JOIN THEM!

YES, FATHER! I
WON'T FAIL THIS
TIME! YOU'LL BE
PROUD OF ME!



GOODBYE,
SON! I'LL
ALWAYS
BE WITH
YOU!

GOODBYE,
FATHER!



HEY! LOOKIT
WHO'S HERE!

I'LL EXPLAIN
LATER, GUYS!
GIVE ME A
GUN!

WE NEED
EVERY
MAN!



COME ON, YOU SCUM!
LOTS OF LEAD
WAITING FOR YOU!



THE ENEMY CHARGES...

YIIIIII—
KILL ALL!

BETTER QUIT,
AMERICANS!

SO
M-MANY
OF THEM!



YOU SURRENDER,
AMERICAN FOOLS!
WE NOT KILL—
MAYBE!



WE BETTER
QUIT, KID! CAN'T
FIGHT THE WHOLE
GOOK ARMY!

NO!
RUN, STEVE!
I'LL HOLD
'EM!



SUDDENLY...

KANE! LOOK!
I'M NUTS, OR
THOSE ARE
DOUGHBOYS!
GHOSTS!

I'LL EXPLAIN
IT SOMEDAY
—IF I
LIVE!

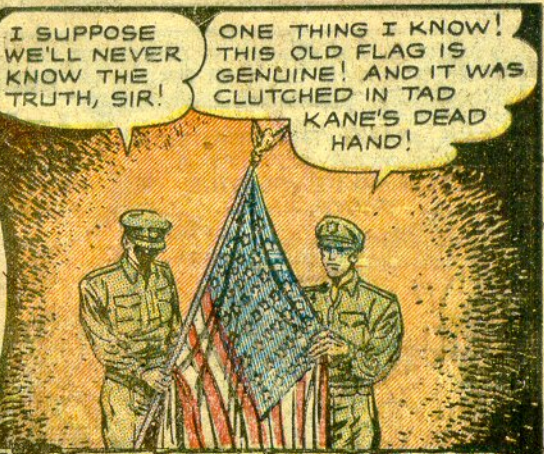


HERE GOES THE
OLD FLAG AGAIN!

GIVE
THEM
COLD
STEEL!

CHARGE, MEN!
REMEMBER THE
ARGONNE!

GAA—
NO CAN
FIGHT
GHOSTS!



THE CASE RECORDED ABOVE IS ON FILE IN WASHINGTON. WHO KNOWS? PERHAPS WHEN BRAVE G.I.'S NEED THEM, THE GHOSTS WILL COME AGAIN...

The End

Pages of DEATH

A QUIET COLLEGE TOWN, TWO YOUNG LOVERS, A FASCINATING EXPERIMENT—SURELY NOTHING ALARMING IN THAT! YET UNTOLD HORRORS LURKED IN THE SHADOWS WHILE A MAN PLOTTED THE STRANGEST MURDER IN THE WORLD! COME ALONG, THOSE WHO HAVE THE COURAGE, AND STEP INTO THE PAGES OF THE BOOK OF DEATH...



YOUNG ALVIN PENNY, PROFESSOR OF CHEMISTRY, IS ON THE BRINK OF SUCCESS...

SEE, JEAN? THE REACTION! I'VE ALMOST GOT IT! A LITTLE MORE VOLATILE SALTS, AND...

I—I WISH YOU WOULDN'T, PEN! I'M AFRAID!

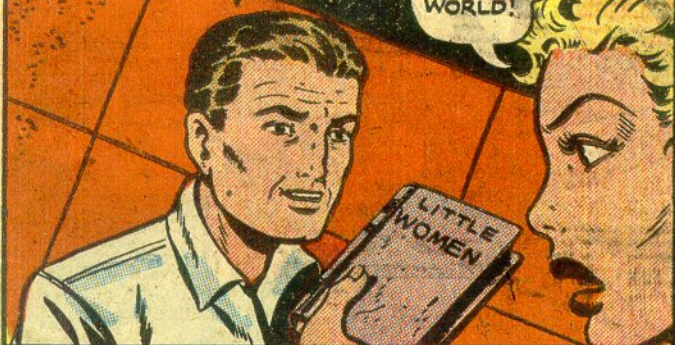
I CAN'T STOP NOW! IT'S TAKEN ME YEARS TO FIND THE CHEMICAL BALANCE THAT WILL BREAK DOWN HUMAN TISSUE AND LET THE PSYCHE ENTER INTO A NEW TIME-SPACE DIMENSION! THE WORLD OF FICTION, FOR INSTANCE!

IT'S SO FANTASTIC! HOW CAN A HUMAN BEING ENTER A BOOK?



MAYBE I CAN'T! BUT MY THEORY IS THAT A WRITER CREATES REAL PEOPLE. THEY ACTUALLY EXIST IN A WORLD OF THEIR OWN! IF MY FORMULA CAN BREAK DOWN THE SPACE-TIME BARRIER...

YES! I REMEMBER! THE BOOK ITSELF IS ONLY A GATE INTO THIS OTHER WORLD!



WHILE NOT FAR AWAY, ANOTHER MAN PLOTS MURDER... IDEAS! HAH — IF HE KNEW HOW I HATED HIM...

I LOVE JEAN! I'VE GOT TO HAVE HER! IF ONLY SHE DIDN'T LOVE THAT FOOL PENNY! WITH HIS CRACKPOT



BUT ALVIN PENNY HAS NO WAY OF KNOWING THAT ROGER HORN HATES HIM AND COVETS HIS GIRL! HORN IS ALSO A CHEMISTRY INSTRUCTOR! SO ONE MURKY NIGHT...

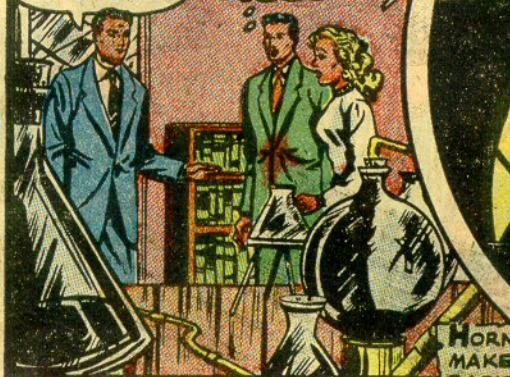
I'M GLAD YOU AGREED TO HELP, ROGER! I NEED AN EXPERT WITNESS! AND IF ANYTHING SHOULD GO WRONG...

GLAD TO HELP, OLD MAN!

I HOPE THE STUFF KILLS HIM!

PLEASE HURRY, PEN! I CAN'T STAND MUCH OF THIS!

I'M READY! IF THIS WORKS I WILL DISAPPEAR — AND I'LL BE IN THE WORLD OF THIS BOOK! I'LL MEET THE GENTLE, KINDLY PEOPLE OF "LITTLE WOMEN". HERE GOES!



HORN MAKES A RAPID SWITCH OF BOOKS...



EVEN AS PEN DRINKS THE LIQUID, ROGER HORN HAS A FIENDISH INSPIRATION.

OF COURSE! IF THAT FOOL IDEA *SHOULD* WORK, I'LL BE RID OF HIM FOREVER! GENTLE, KINDLY PEOPLE, HUH!

ROGER! LOOK! IT-IT'S HAPPENING!

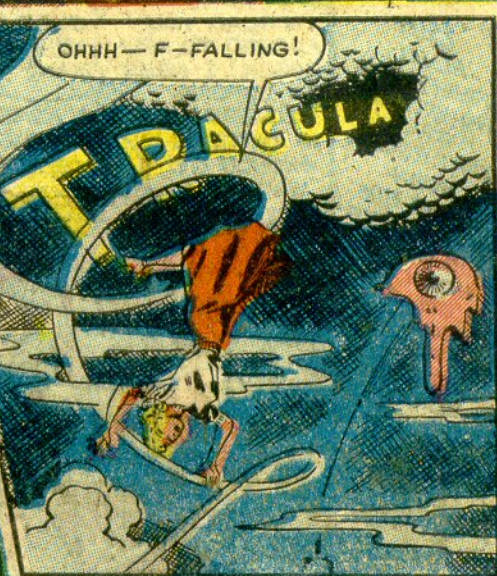
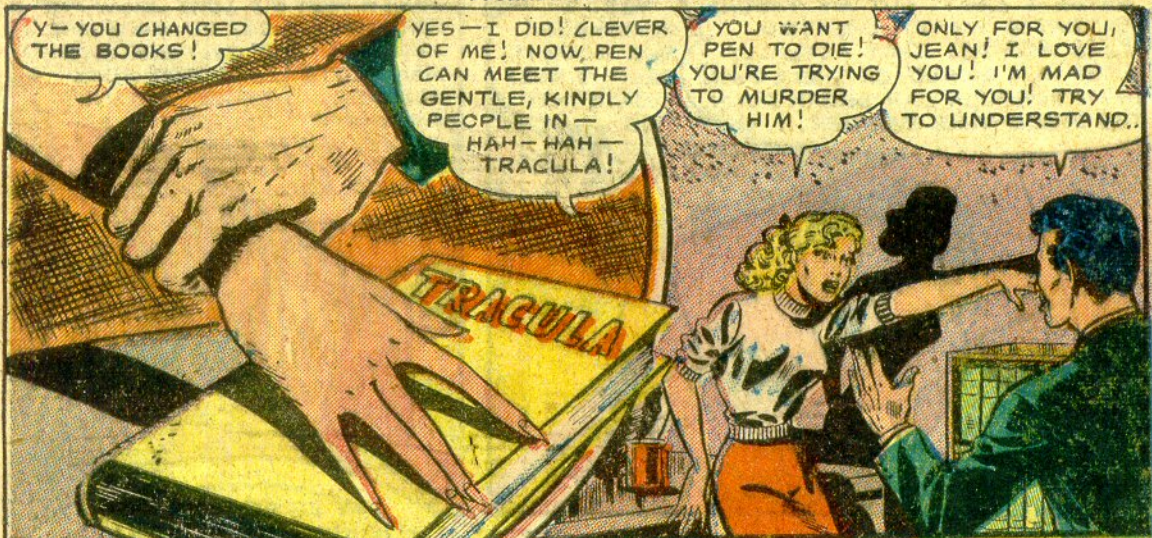
N-NO! DON'T— MUSTN'T CHANGE BOOK — I — GOING NOW...

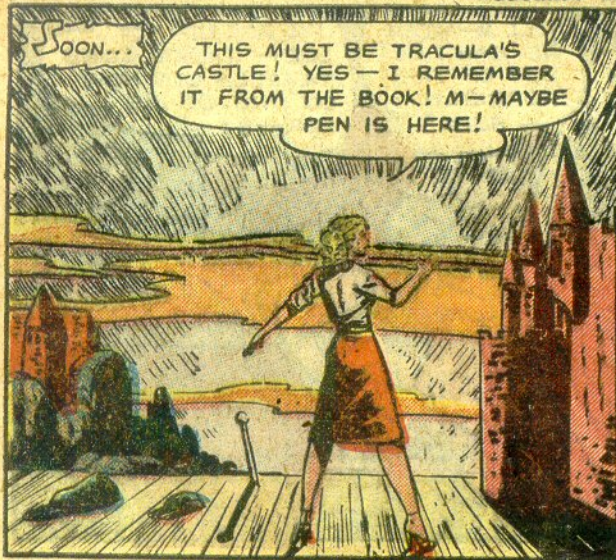
PEN! WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO SAY?

GOODBYE, CHUMP! GIVE MY LOVE TO —TRACULA!

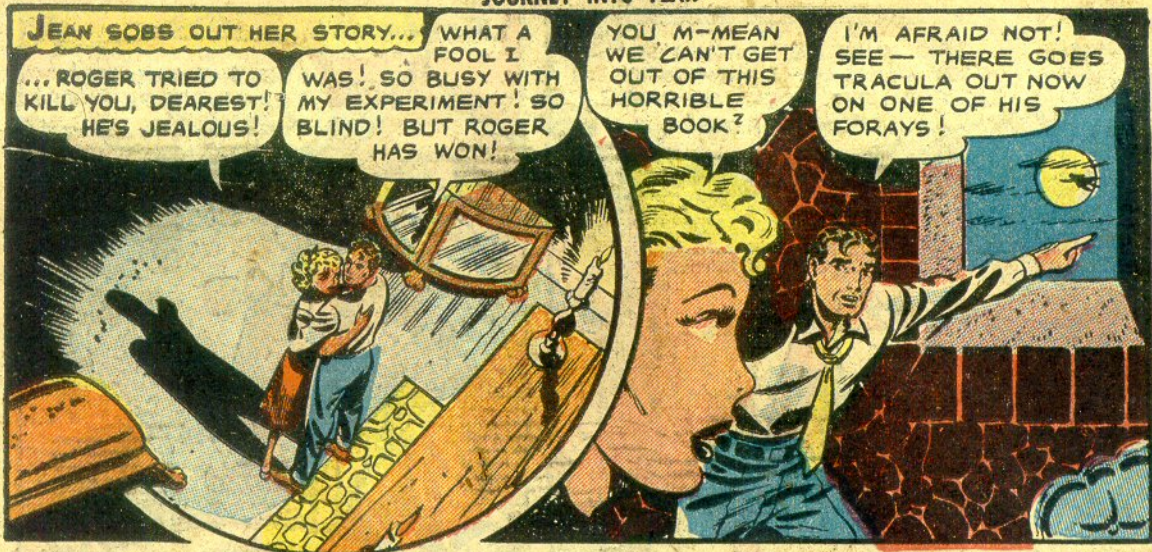


JOURNEY INTO FEAR





JOURNEY INTO FEAR



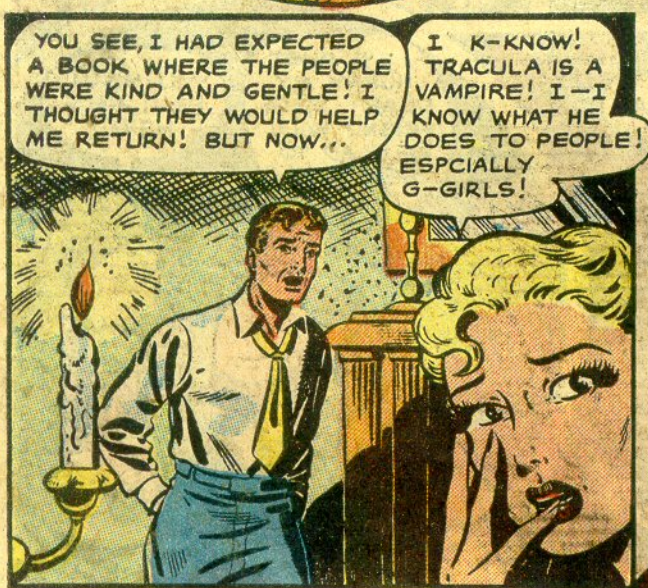
JEAN SOBS OUT HER STORY...

...ROGER TRIED TO KILL YOU, DEAREST! HE'S JEALOUS!

WHAT A FOOL I WAS! SO BUSY WITH MY EXPERIMENT! SO BLIND! BUT ROGER HAS WON!

YOU M-MEAN WE CAN'T GET OUT OF THIS HORRIBLE BOOK?

I'M AFRAID NOT! SEE— THERE GOES TRACULA OUT NOW ON ONE OF HIS FORAYS!



YOU SEE, I HAD EXPECTED A BOOK WHERE THE PEOPLE WERE KIND AND GENTLE! I THOUGHT THEY WOULD HELP ME RETURN! BUT NOW...

I K-KNOW! TRACULA IS A VAMPIRE! I—I KNOW WHAT HE DOES TO PEOPLE! ESPECIALLY G-GIRLS!



SUDDENLY...

WOO—OOOOOO—OOO...

OH— THAT HORRIBLE SOUND!

TRACULA'S WOLVES GREETING HIM! HE DIDN'T STAY LONG!



HE'S GOT ANOTHER GIRL WITH HIM! OH—I CAN'T LOOK!

THE FIEND!

LOOK WELL, MY DEAR! HAH—HAH— YOUR TURN WILL COME SOON! WHEN I AM THIRSTY AGAIN!

MEANTIME...

I REPRODUCED THE FORMULA FROM THE DREGS IN THE GLASS, BUT I NEED AN ANTIDOTE! I'VE GOT TO HAVE IT!

IF I CAN MAKE AN ANTIDOTE I CAN GO AFTER JEAN! I'LL BRING HER BACK! BUT I'LL—(CHUCKLE)—LEAVE PEN WITH TRACULA!

HAVE TO TEST IT FIRST! H—HERE I GO!

ROGER HORN SWALLOWS SOME OF THE FORMULA...

I'M FADING! GAAA— FEEL SO FUNNY! WEAK! B—BUT MUST T—TRY ANTIDOTE BEFORE I...

THEN THE ANTIDOTE...

H—HOPE IT ISN'T TOO LATE!

AND...

IT WORKS! IT REVERSES THE REACTION! NOW I CAN GO INTO THE BOOK AND GET JEAN!

